



VOL. 4 NO. 4 OCTOBER, 2008

IL CAVALIERE

OFFICIAL BULLETIN OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF THE ITALIAN LEGIONS OF MERIT

Pelosi to Accept Society Medal



The Gold Medal of the American Society of the Italian Legions of Merit will be presented to The Honorable Nancy D. Pelosi, Speaker of the House of Representatives of the Congress of the United States. Speaker Pelosi is one of only twelve Americans conferred with Italy's highest decoration, *Cavaliere di Gran Croce* of the Order of Merit.

The Society's Gold Medal, its highest accord, is reserved for heads of state and personages of similar station: heads of government, of supreme organs of state, of thrones, principalities and sovereign entities internationally recognized. Speaker Pelosi enjoys leadership of the Legislature, a co-equal branch of the American Government. In 2007, the medal was awarded to His Excellency Giorgio Napolitano, President of Italy.

With arrangements to be concluded by Cav. John F. Calvelli, a delegation headed by Society President *Cav. di Gran Croce* Justice Dominic R. Massaro will be received at the Capitol in Washington to make the presentation.

The medal, which is a full size medallion, depicts the Great Seal of the United States, indicative of the American quality of the Society, with the Society's name in the round. The reverse will be dated and inscribed to read: "Presented to/The Honorable Nancy D. Pelosi/Speaker of the House/Congress of the United States." Suspended by a ribbon suitable for neck collar wear, it features both the Italian and American colors, symbolic of the shared values and traditional bonds

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43rd Annual Gathering Set for New York

The 43rd Annual Dinner of the American Society of the Italian Legions of Merit is scheduled for Friday, December 5, 2008, at the Union League Club in New York City. *Cavalieri* from throughout the United States will come together for the black tie gathering. It will open with a gala cocktail reception followed by a concert and then the dinner.

The annual event expects to see both of Italy's ambassadors here in attendance: H.E. Giovanni Castellaneta, Italy's envoy in Washington, D.C. who will again lend his patronage to the evening's success, and H.E. Giulio Terzi di

The dinner will also mark the 60th Anniversary of the Italian Constitution of 1948

Sant'Agata, newly posted to the United Nations in New York as Italy's permanent representative at the world body. The dinner will mark the 60th Anniversary of the Italian Constitution of 1948, and proceeds from the event will be directed to the Villa Firenze Foundation now being launched by



COMM. ROSEMARIE GALLINA-SANTANGELO

Ambassador Castellaneta (see *Il Cavaliere*, July, 2008). Leading *decorati* drawn from all walks of life will mix with members of the diplomatic corps from countries bordering Italy. The formal dinner is the culmination of the Society's annual gathering (December 4-5), which will feature business and social events at the Consulate General of Italy, the Italian Government Tourist Board, the Columbus Townhouse and

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Revisiting:

The Union League Club

Site of the Society's 42nd Annual Dinner in 2007, the Union League Club will, by popular demand, serve again for its 43rd. The prestigious venue was erected on the corner of Park Avenue and 37th Street in 1931; the structure was designed by noted architect Benjamin Wyster Morris. The Georgian exterior, with its symmetrical red brick facade, reflects familiar motifs of brownstone mansions that once lined the avenue, but on a multi-storied grand scale. The architectural ensemble formed by the entrance foyer and grand staircase stands as a New York landmark interior. The edifice contains 60 bedrooms for members and guests, a variety of meeting rooms for business and social functions, and one of the most extensive private reference libraries in New York City. The Union League is home to a distinguished art collection and features an on-going exhibit gallery. The fitness center features all the amenities of a first class sports club, including international squash courts. Its main ballroom is one of the most sought after in the City.



Society Sharpens International Focus

The American Society of the Italian Legions of Merit is expanding outreach to Italy's geographic neighbors -- those nation states which either share geographic proximity to Italy or otherwise enjoy a special relationship with Rome. This to further cordiality, but also cooperation in focusing the Society more particularly on two issues: humanitarian goals announced by the United Nations and supported by both the United States and Italy to address assistance to the needy, and the preservation of Italy's cultural legacy in these countries.

"Significantly, we wish to accent the Society's keeping with the centuries old knightly tradition of charity by way of economic and social beneficence to the less fortunate," according to *Cav. di Gran Croce* Justice Dominic R. Massaro, President of the Society. "Also, fulfilling the Society's obligation to comport with its constituted purpose to preserve and advance the Italian cultural patrimony, with which it is inextricably linked," he noted.

In the former instance, the Society will liaise with ambassadors from these countries in residence in Washington, D.C. and at the United Nations in New York, as well as with their national orders of merit, in joint projects seeking the eradication of poverty, of disease and, by extension, considerations of sustainable development. In the latter, the Society will consult with Italy's envoys here respecting Italian initiatives abroad concerned with the preservation of cultural patrimony.

Initially identified as Italy's geographic neighbors: Algeria, Albania, Austria, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Egypt, France, Greece, Libya, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, San Marino, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, Tunisia and The Vatican. ♦



Pelosi to Accept Society Medal

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between the two nations. A miniature of the Medallion, a chivalric medal, is available to Society members who may wish to display it whenever invitations call for

the wearing of decorations.

Justice Massaro will take the occasion to update Speaker Pelosi on the Society's efforts in the diplomatic arena, as well

as noting its increasing levels of charitable beneficence and wider concern for Italian cultural preservation. ♦

IL CAVALIERE



AMERICAN SOCIETY OF THE ITALIAN LEGIONS OF MERIT

Il Cavaliere is an official publication of the American Society of the Italian Legions of Merit, a not-for-profit, tax exempt organization legally incorporated in the State of New York.

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Terzi at the United Nations

Giulio Terzi di Sant'Agata is Italy's new Permanent Representative at the United Nations. He succeeds Ambassador Marcello Spatafora, who has retired. Born in Bergamo, the new envoy graduated in International Law from the University of Milan and joined the Italian Foreign Ministry in 1973.



Giulio Terzi di Sant'Agata

Before taking up his duties at the world body, Ambassador Terzi was Deputy Secretary General of the Ministry in Rome, and then Director General for Multilateral Political Affairs and Human Rights.

In this capacity, he covered major international security and political issues, especially those dealt with by the U.N., European Union, NATO and the G8. Ambassador Terzi's most recent foreign service posting was as Ambassador to Israel (2002-04). His years there were highlighted by the improvement of EU-Israel relations and the re-engagement of the Israel and Palestinian sides in the peace process.

Early on in his career, the ambassador was the Ministry's Protocol Officer in charge of visits by Italian State Dignitaries and Government Officials. In 1975, he was appointed Head of Chancery and First Secretary for political affairs at the Embassy of Italy in Paris. Back to Rome in 1978 as Special Assistant to the Ministry's Secretary General, he was then sent to Canada, first as Economic and Commercial Counsellor, subsequently as Consul General in Vancouver during Expo 86.

In Rome again, in 1987, he served at the Economic Directorate of the Ministry, and then as Head of Personnel. Further overseas assignments were to NATO as Political Adviser to the Italian Mission in the aftermath of the Cold War.

From 1993 to 1998, he was at the Mission of Italy to the U.N. in New York, as First Counsellor for Political Affairs and later as Minister and Deputy Permanent Representative under then Ambassador F. Paolo Fulci, now the Society's Special Representative in Rome. It was during this period that Italy held, for the last time before the current biennium, a non permanent seat on the central policy-making Security Council. By the mid-nineties, new global challenges pointed to the need for major structural reforms of U.N. bodies. Plans put forward confronted Italy with marginalization at the highest level. The issue led to cacophonous outcry from the organized Italian American leadership to the Clinton White House that the interests of the United States would not be best served by supporting any such plan. This during a time when Ambassador Terzi worked in parallel with the Society in forestalling that occurrence. The issue was not pushed by the U.S. and never brought before the U.N. for a vote.

A Grande Ufficiale of Italy's Order of Merit, the ambassador's hobbies are chess, cycling and swimming. Last April, he became father of twins: a boy and a girl. ♦



Companions Class Admitted

A change in procedure allowing for individuals duly conferred by a recognized Order of Chivalry, other than one conferred by Italy, to directly petition for admission into the Society in a category of "merit" has engaged the Admissions Committee. This according to Cav. Richard Torrenzano, committee chair, who reports that scores of knights and dames from all across the United States who are enrolled in a half dozen Orders have inquired.

While the Society's "regular" membership is comprised exclusively of those who because of some personal quality or the rendering of some special service have been decorated with a chivalric Order conferred by the Republic of Italy, the Society's board recently revamped its associate membership program with the attachment of a Companionship open to a select number of knights and/or dames of other recognized Orders.

Required as a prerequisite for admission as a Companion is a pledge to adhere to the purpose(s) of the Society. This "to do everything to maintain the cordial relationship and tending to strengthen the traditional friendship and good will existing between the people of the United States and Italy." Previously, such individuals needed a sponsored application to become a "Distinguished Associate" of the Society. "Now, proof of knightly credentials combine with the pledge to make for sufficient recommendation," noted Cav. Torrenzano. "Each of these individuals have already been through an exacting vetting process by their respective Orders," he observed. "And their pledge, of course, is a matter of personal honor."

Those admitted as "Companions of Merit" will be accorded recognition at the rank he or she currently enjoys from his or her Order. Companions receive the Society's chivalric miniature medal to be worn along with the miniature(s) of his/her Order(s), as appropriate, on formal occasions. Also, a subscription to *Il Cavaliere*, the Society's official bulletin,

and invitations to all Society events.

The revamping and establishment of the Companionship also provides for accredited diplomats to be invited to the Society from time to time in a category of "dignity."

Distinguished Associate membership remains available for spouses or lineal descendants of deceased *cavalieri*, as it is for officialdom otherwise recognized by Italy, commissioned military officers and high prelates. Admitted as a Distinguished Associate is Army Texas Guard Capt. James A. Passamano.

Admitted as Companions in the Class of 2008: *Comm.* Donald P. Angotta, KCHS, of Connecticut; *Cav.* John A. Bova, KHS, of New York; *Cav.* Mario Bruschi, KHS, of New York; *Comm.* Dr. Gerald M. Cattaro, KCHS, of New York; *Comm.* Richard L. Cosnotti, KSML, of Florida; *Cav.* Alphonse Della-Donna, KM, of Florida; *Cav.* Dr. E.A. Farone, KSG, of New York; *Cav.* Marino Giammarco, KSG, of California; *Comm.* Anthony J. Izzo, KCHS, of Florida; *Cav. di Gran Croce* Francis J. Lodato, KGCHS, of Florida; *Cav. di Gr. Croce* Nicholas E. Mastronardi, KGCHS, of New York; *Dama di Gr. Croce* Valerie E. Mastroniardi, LGCHS, of New York; *Cav. di Gr. Croce* Philip S. Milone, KGCHS, of New York; *Cav.* Ernesto



Texas Guard Captain
James A. Passamano

Molmenti, KM, of New York; *Comm.* Michael A. Montesano, KCHS, of New York; *Comm.* Dominick Napoletano, KCHS, of New York; *Cav.* Vito R. Nardelli, KM, of New Jersey; *Cav.* Thomas Pecora, KM, of New Jersey; *Cav.* Antonio Rummo, KHS, of New York; *Cav. di Gr. Croce* Ronald A. Sablosky,, KGCD, of New York; *Cav.* Angelo Sedacca, KMS, of New York; *Comm.* Francesco Storia, KCHS, of New York; and *Cav.* Philip E. Zegarelli, KM, of New York.

This brings to 55 the number of Companions of Merit, the remainder having been transferred from the category of Distinguished Associate earlier in the year. These include: *Cav.* Nicholas J. Bartilucci, KSG, of New York; *Cav. di Gr. Croce* Jose M. Chaves, KGCM, of New York; *Cav.* Roy L. De Barbieri, Esq., KSML, of Connecticut; *Comm.* Joseph A. De Cesaris, KCSG, of Maryland; *Cav.* William J. Dowling, Esq., KSML, of New York; *Cav.* Joseph E. Fay, KSML, of New York; *Cav. Hon.* Joseph Golia, KM, of New York; *Cav.* Alan Guarino, KSG, of New York; *Cav.* Dr. Richard A. Guarino, KM, of New Jersey; *Comm.* Eric J. Ierardi, KCML, of Pennsylvania; *Comm. Dr.* Vincent V. La Bruna, KCSGG, of New York; *Cav. di Gr. Croce* Dr. Alfred J. Liotta, KGCHS, of New York; *Gr. Uff.* Deacon. Nicholas Mazzei, KGOCJ, of New York; *Cav.* Pasquale Menna, Esq., KSML, of New Jersey; *Cav.* Patrick A. O'Boyle, Esq., KMS, of New Jersey; *Comm.* Robert V. Piluso, KHS, of New York; *Cav.* Peter A. Piscitelli, Esq., KHS, of New York; *Dama* Berenice A. Reed, KSG, of Maryland; *Cav.* Richard Salerni, KMS, of New York; *Comm.* Deacon Ernest F. Salomone, KCHS, of New York; *Uff.*

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LEGEND

Ranks:

- K - Knight (*Cav.*)
- KO - Knight Officer (*Uff.*)
- KC - Knight Commander (*Comm.*)
- KGO - Knight Grand Officer (*Gr. Uff.*)
- KGC - Knight Grand Cross (*Cav. di Gr. Croce*)

NB: "L" (Lady) in place of "K" for female members

Orders:

- BHS - Byzantine Holy Sepulchre
- CJ - Cross of Jerusalem
- DE - Durrani Empire (Barakzai)
- HS - Holy Sepulchre
- M - Malta
- MS - Merit of Savoy
- SG - St. George
- SGG - St. Gregory the Great
- SJ - St. John
- SML - Saints Maurice and Lazarus
- TJ - Temple of Jerusalem

Dipolmatic Reception Revisted

Il Cavaliere takes a moment to recall the splendid gathering in tribute to the Italian Diplomatic and Consular Corps that was featured in the last issue. Here, another round of photographic remembrances of a May evening well spent at the Society's Columbus Townhouse headquarters in New York.



1. Daniela Anastasio and Dr. Francesco Bardazzi

2. Stephen Madsen, Esq.

3. Cav. di Gran Croce Ronald and Mary Ann Sublesky, KGCD

4. Loyse Barardo

5. Dr. Salvatore Cumella

6. Dr. Robert V. Piluso, Ph.D., KCHS

7. Ginsy Russo and Angelina Pecora

8. Ju-Ri Oliva

9. First Secretary Emanuele di Lorenzo

10. Dame Carole Acunto

11. Nino Antonelli

12. Cav. Giulio Picoli

13. Laura Spatafora

14. Cav. Jack Di Piazza, Cav. Vincenzo Marra and Comm. Peter Caruso

15. Taipei Economic/Cultural Deputy William W. Lin

Photos by Vito Catalano



Mini Grants Top \$150,000.00

For a third year, the American Society of the Italian Legions of Merit will award fifty \$1,000 mini grants to focus attention on worthwhile endeavors that comport with its constituted purpose. It raises to \$150,000 the amount awarded under the program since it was launched in 2006. According to *Cav. di Gran Croce* Ambassador Peter F. Secchia, of Michigan, chair of the Society's Charities Board, "the grants cover the nation from 'A' (the Albanian Children's Fund) to 'Z' (the Italian Fountain at the Bronx Zoo)." The former Ambassador to Italy (1989-1993) said that the Board continues to increase attention to humanitarian endeavors "even beyond our borders" that deserve Society recognition, "especially where children are involved."

Assisting Ambassador Secchia with the Charities Board task are: *Cav. John F. Calvelli, Esq.*, of New York, executive vice president of the Wildlife Conservation Society; *Cav. Cesar Taormina*, of New York, building and real estate developer; and *Uff. Senator Renato G. Turano*, of Illinois.

"It must always be remembered," said Society President, *Cav. di Gran Croce* Justice Dominic R. Massaro, that the mini grant program "does not so much represent financial largess as, rather, a sign of the interest and esteem of the Society for the particular grantee... a moral identification with efforts that go toward a wider appreciation of the Italian cultural contribution, as well as symbolic but nonetheless direct and assistance by way of economic beneficence for the needy and less fortunate." The jurist stated that the Society serves as a "moral center" in sharing awareness, generating appreciation and encouraging further support by others.

The full list of 2008 grantees (all of which will receive a Society check in January, 2009) include:

Albanian Children Fund (New York), for increasing Italian American interest in saving Albanian children affected by disease;
Amici (Illinois), for chronicling the national Italian American experience;
 Andrijevic Elementary School (Montenegro), for increasing Italian American interest in educating youngsters in remote villages;
 Bella Italia Mia (New York), for convening Italian culture seminars;
 Biblioteca Ambrosiana (Milan), for restoring and conserving *DaVinci's Codex Atlanticus*;
 Botto House (New Jersey), for documenting the Italian role in the American Labor Movement;
 Bowers Museum of Cultural Arts (California), for instituting an Italian film program;
 Calabrian Heritage Italian American Organization (New York), for keeping Calabrian tradition and culture alive;
 Council of Italian American organizations (Connecticut), for cultural programs to foster Italian heritage;
 Cultural Assets Rehabilitation Project (Eritrea), for preserving the Italian architectural patrimony of Asmara;
 Dante Alighieri Society of Jersey City (New Jersey), for celebrating the Society's centennial;
 Engle Entertainment (New York), for producing the documentary

"Thank You Italy! How Jews Survived in Italy During the Holocaust";
 Georgian Court University (New Jersey), for advancing educational exchanges with Lucca;
Giornale Italo Americano (New York), for chronicling the Italian American community in the tri-state area;

Grand Lodge of Colorado, Order Sons of Italy in American (Colorado), for offsetting native American efforts to abolish Columbus Day as a state holiday;
 International Festival of Arts & Ideas (Connecticut), for presenting outstanding work by Italian performing arts companies;
 Italian American Folk Arts Federation of America (California), for featuring folk dance troupes from across America;
 Italian American Writers Association (New York), for continuing the association's public reading program;
 Italian Cultural Institute (New York), for expanding instruction to a wider audience;
 Italian Cultural Society (Washington, D.C.), for enhancing appreciation of the Italian language;
 Italian Fulbright Commission (Rome), for promoting cultural and educational exchange between the United States and Italy;
 Italian Language Foundation (Delaware), for preserving the College Board Advancement Placement Italian Language and Culture Test;
 Italian Language Inter-Cultural Alliance (ILICA) (Delaware), for promoting the Italian Language and Culture;



*Cav. di Gran Croce
Ambassador Peter F. Secchia*



Order Sons of Italy in America (Washington, D.C.), "for encouraging at-large membership among youths"



Path to Peace Foundation (New York), "for spreading the Vatican's message of peace and human rights"

Italian Oral History Project (Ohio), for documenting "*Tremosine: Lombard Voices from America*";
Italian Teachers Association of New Jersey (New Jersey), for promoting Italian language and culture programs;
Italic Institute of American, Midwest Branch (Illinois), for furthering the pioneering of air space by General Italo Balbo;
Liguri nel Mondo (California), for advancing the traditions of Liguria in the America West;
Mary Cariola Children's Center (New York), for instructing the Italian language in and about Rochester;
Medical Mission Sisters (Ethiopia), for increasing Italian American interest in rural hospital services in Attati;
Mentoring USA/Italia (Salerno), for preventing school drop outs;
Missionaries of St. Charles (New York), for furthering the Italian Apostolate;
National Capital Learning Resource Center (Washington, D.C.), for promoting cultural resource availability for teachers of Italian;



Princeton University's Art Museum (New Jersey), "for acknowledging and furthering the Italian cultural patrimony"



Wildlife Conservation Society (New York), "for maintaining the Italian Fountain at the Bronx Zoo"

Nottingham High School (New Jersey), for constructing a bocce court as an Italian cultural expression;
Orange County Italian Cultural Alliance (California), for conducting Italian language classes;
Order Sons of Italy in America (Washington, D.C.), for encouraging At Large Membership among youths;
Path to Peace Foundation (New York), for spreading the Vatican's message of peace and human rights;
Princeton University Art Museum (New Jersey), for acknowledging and furthering the Italian cultural patrimony;
Public Institution for Formation and Education (Montenegro), for increasing Italian American interest in assisting children with special needs;
San Marino Association to Combat Leukemia (San Marino), for combatting leukemia among children;
Silicon Valley Italian Executives Council (California), for documenting the advances made in science and technology by Italians and Italian Americans;
Sons of Italy Foundation (Pennsylvania), for promoting the 20th Anniversary of the Sons of Italy Archives at the University of Minnesota;
The Italian Cultural Society of Sacramento (California), for expanding the *Altre Voce* newsletter;
UNICO National (New Jersey), for promoting the leadership of Italian American women;
Voce Italiana (Washington, D.C.), for chronicling the Italian American experience in the Capital area;
Westchester Italian Cultural Center (New York), for preserving, promoting and celebrating the language, arts, letters, history and cuisine of Italy;
Wildlife Conservation Society (New York), for maintaining the Italian Fountain at the Bronx Zoo;
Wilkinson College (California), for endowing the MUSCO professorship in Italian Language;
Wisitalia (Wisconsin), for promoting the Italian language and culture in the Wisconsin school system;
Yellow Ribbon Fund (Maryland), for assisting the families of injured Italian American military members while they recover;
Yogi Berra Museum & Learning Center (New Jersey), for preserving and promoting the values of sportsmanship. ♦



43rd Annual Gathering Set for New York

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the Union League Club.

Overall chair for the two-day program is *Comm.* RoseMarie Gallina-Santangelo, Society president emerita. She anticipates a “sell out.” Assisting her as dinner co-chairs are *Cav. di Gran Croce* Dr. Lucio Caputo, of New York, *Cav.* Leandro P. Rizzuto, of Connecticut, and *Uff.* Commissioner Livia S. Sylva, also of New York. *Cav. di Gran Croce* Baroness Mariuccia Zerilli-Marimò, of New York and Monte Carlo, will again play a prime role as the event’s honorary chair.

A private invitation only reception precedes on Wednesday evening, December 3, for benefactors, those purchasing a table of ten guests for the 43rd Annual Dinner. This atop Manhattan’s Hotel Lombardy in the splendid penthouse apartment of Commissioner Sylva.

On the next afternoon, Thursday, December 4, meetings of the Society’s board of directors and general membership, at the invitation of Italian Consul General Francesco M. Talò, will be held at the Consulate. A lecture, “Elena of Montenegro, Queen of Italy,” chaired by *Comm.* Prof. Marco Grassi, will then be offered by Dr. Zirko Andrijasevic, of Montenegro, at the Society’s Columbus Townhouse headquarters. This in turn will be followed by a reception hosted by *Comm.* Lawrence E. Auriana, chairman of the Columbus Citizens Foundation.

On the following morning, Friday, December 5, at the invitation of Italian Government Tourist Board Director, Dr. Riccardo Strano, the Board’s headquarters in Rockefeller Center will be the setting for a briefing on the role, function and policy of Italy’s tourist agency for North America; a tour of the Board’s offices and a luncheon hosted by Director Strano is also scheduled. That evening, the reception, concert and annual dinner will be held in the main ballroom of the Union League Club. ♦

Guarini Honored

At the ceremony naming Jersey City’s main post office the “Frank J. Guarini Post Office Building” are seen (from left): *Cav. di Gran Croce* Justice Dominic R. Massaro, President of the Society; *Gr. Uff.* Congressman Guarini, who for seven terms represented New Jersey in Washington, D.C.; and *Comm.* Dr. Stephen R. Aiello. ♦



El Salvador Feted

Dozens of cavalieri gathered at the United Nations for the Vatican’s Path to Peace Foundation dinner to honor H.E. Elias Antonio Saca Gonzales, President of El Salvador. Seen on the occasion (from left): Dr. Aniello Musella, Italian Trade Commissioner for North America; H.E. Archbishop Celestino Migliore, Permanent Observer of the Holy See at the United Nations; President Saca; Dr. Riccardo Strano, Director of the Italian Tourist Board; and Cav. Richard Torrenzano, dinner chair. ♦





Italians Trust Their President

By Francesco Nicotra*

President of the Republic Giorgio Napolitano is the public figure that Italians most trust. According to a recent poll by the highly regarded Ipsos Institute, 82% of Italians trust and like their Head of State. His popularity has grown by some ten points over the last few months, and Napolitano is fast approaching the 90% scored by former President Carlo Azeglio Ciampi.

The reason that Italians quite rightly trust Napolitano is his capacity to remain above party politics at all times, especially when the tension between government and opposition is particularly high. It is a quality that he has displayed since the first days of his long term as President of Italy's Chamber of Deputies.

The poll also showed that Premier Silvio Berlusconi's popularity has dropped from 57% to 53%, despite his introducing a number of notable measures that have actually been well received by the general public, such as deploying several thousand soldiers tasked with assisting the police to maintain public order and resolving the long-standing problems over garbage collection and disposal that have plagued the Campania region, not only damaging Naples' image around the world, but that of the entire country.

The President of Confindustria (the Association of Italian Industrialists),

Luca Cordero di Montezemolo, came second to Napolitano in the polls with a popularity score of 57%, a position he shared with Gianfranco Fini, now President of the Chamber, whose calm impartiality is something that even his political adversaries readily acknowledge.

In common with other developed countries, Italy is in the midst of an economic crisis, caused above all by the increase in oil prices, but the other major problem the government is faced with is that of illegal immigration. The

*The reason that Italians
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flood of desperate people who have chosen Italy as the country in which to seek out a better life -- or simply in which to try and survive -- stems mostly from the North African coastline. Thousands of wretched souls, including many women and children, place their lives in the hands of the unscrupulous, who could justifiably be described as merchants of human flesh. Offering to transport these people for what are often vast sums of money, the boats they use are dilapidated and unsafe for making the trip across the Mediterranean to Italian shores. In the first six months of this year, almost 500 bodies of migrants who had drowned in the Straits of Sicily were recovered -- a number that excludes those never found of course -- and boats manned by the Coast Guard or Revenue officers retrieved a similar number. It is clear, however, that the number of victims who have drowned is considerably higher.

Agreements drawn up between the Italian and Albanian governments have meant that there are now fewer illegal immigrants from Albania. In an attempt to stem the far greater flow of those who set out from African shores, Premier Berlusconi recently trav-



FRANCESCO NICOTRA

eled to Tripoli to meet with the Libyan leader, Colonel Muammar Gheddafi, a man that Italians have long suspected (probably correctly) was not making much of an effort at all to prevent these despairing people from embarking on their perilous journeys to Italy from Libya. Gheddafi has always maintained a highly tense relationship with Italy over the country's colonial domination of Libya that began in 1912 and was brought to an end by World War II. On this occasion, however, the two leaders did sign an agreement aimed at finally bringing this contentious issue to a close. Italy apologized for the harm it caused during the colonial period and has undertaken to pay five billion dollars in damages over the next twenty years that are to be used to build a long coastal highway that will link the Egyptian and Tunisian borders. Libya, for its part, has undertaken to recognize Italy as a privileged partner when it comes to oil and gas supplies and to the building of major industrial complexes on its soil. Above all, Libya has also promised to collaborate fully with the Italian police in stopping these decrepit boats with their human cargoes from setting sail at all. It is an historic agreement that we can only hope has, at last, resolved the tense relationship between the two countries, especially as the Italians of today have been expressing strong disapproval of that aspect of their country's past for a long time. ♦

* A keen and balanced observer of the Italian scene, Francesco Nicotra is the publisher of Italy Italy magazine. His articles often appear in leading media outlets on both sides of the Atlantic.



In Memoriam...

Comm. Marchese Lino de Vito
di Porriasa, KCSG, KM
NEW YORK

Cav. Martin G. Picillo, Esq., KSML
NEW JERSEY

Companionate Class

CONTINUED FROM 4

David V. Skoblow, Esq., KOML, of New York; *Cav.* Salvatore F. Sodano, KM, of New York; *Cav.* Richard L. Soloway, KTJ, of New York; *Dama* Donna A. Soloway, KTJ, of New York; *Comm.* Michael J. Sullivan, KCSG, of Maryland; *Cav.* Marc M. Tract, KMS, of New York; *Cav. di Gr. Cr.* Domenic A. Vavala, of Rhode Island, KGCSG; *Comm.* Dr. Thomas Vesce, KCSJ, of North Carolina; *Gr. Uff.* Marco Viola, KGOBHS, of New York; and *Comm.* Dr. Vincent A. Zuccarelli, KCHS, of New York.

Cavalieri aware of individuals who are conferred knights or dames or who otherwise qualify for consideration as either a Companion or a Distinguished Associate and who wish to advance them for membership in the Society may obtain details directly from *Cav.* Torrenzano at (212) 681-1700, ext. 111. ♦

HELPCORNER

Cavalieri who may wish to receive recognition by and parity in another order of knighthood are invited to write: Chief of Protocol, American Society of the Italian Legions of Merit, Eight East 69th Street, New York, New York 10021. (Please include a telephone number.)

Confidential advice is available respecting qualification and sponsorship for any number of recognized dynastic, religious and/or confraternal orders of chivalry for those desirous of informing themselves about same.

Benvenuti Cavalieri

The President of Italy Giorgio Napolitano, head of all Italian chivalric Orders, has decreed to the Minister of Foreign Affairs the following names for conferral of or promotion in the Order of Merit of the Italian Republic and the Order of the Star of Italian Solidarity:



***Cav.* Gilda B.R. Baldassari**
New Jersey

***Gr. Uff.* Daniele Bodini**
New York

***Cav.* Richard Greco, Jr.**
New York

***Comm.* Randolph H. Guthrie**
New York

***Comm.* Beatrice Holden Guthrie**
New York

***Comm.* Peter Kalikow**
New York

***Cav.* Dr. Domenico Mignone**
New York

***Uff.* Roberto Pietroforte**
New York

***Comm.* John Salamone**
Virginia

***Cav.* Andrew J. Spano**
New York



***Cav.* Giada De Laurentis**
California

***Cav.* Gessica Guidi**
California

***Cav.* Luisa Del Guidice**
California

***Cav.* Andrea Laguni**
California

***Cav.* Ugo Mamolo**
California

Looking Back...

... thirty-eight years ago to a Society dinner.

Seated (from left) Mrs. Marshall Tullock and Mrs. Richard Ney. Standing Italian Consul General Vieri Trexler; *Comm.* Major Mario G. Remo, then President of the Society; and *Cav.* I. M. Bomba.





Hold the Date...

Thursday
December 4, 2008
43rd Annual Meeting

Friday
December 5, 2008
43rd Anniversary Dinner

New York City

Did You Know?

... Italy now has six main political parties:

Popolo Della Libertà (PDL) - The majority party in the Italian government, created by the merger of the *Forza Italia (FI) Party*, headed by Silvio Berlusconi, and the *Alleanza Nazionale (AN)*, headed by Gianfranco Fini;

Partito Democratico (PD) - Italy's second most powerful party. It is a merger of the *Democratici di Sinistra (Democrats of the Left)* and the *Margherita (the Daisy Party)*, representing a faction of former Christian Democrats;

Lega Nord (LN) - Formed in the early 1990's by Umberto Bossi, who still leads it, and allied with the PDL on the right, it promotes greater autonomy for the regions and strongly opposes immigration;

Unione Di Centro (UDC) - An independent party representing former Christian Democrats, the party that dominated Italian politics from 1948 to 1992;

Italia Dei Valori (IDV) - Allied with the PD on the left, its platform includes promotion of ethics and reform of Italy's legal system regarding crime and punishment; and

Partito Radicale (PR) - A small party also allied with the PD on the left, it champions social reform and helped legalize divorce in 1974 and abortion and contraception in 1978. ♦

Cavalieri

in the news...

Comm. Stephen R. Aiello (New York) appointed chair of New York City's newly formed Commission on School Governance

Comm. Mario Andretti (Pennsylvania) named a "Living Legend" for race car victories by the Library of Congress

Comm. Matilda Raffa Cuomo (New York) named to board of the Italian Language Foundation

Cav. di Gran Croce Admiral Edmund P. Giamfastiani, Jr. (Maryland) named Grand Marshal of New York's Columbus Day Parade

Comm. Prof. Marco Grassi (New York) featured speaker at Gamma Kappa Alpha, National Italian Language Honor Society

Comm. Prof. Eric Ierardi, KCML (New York) appointed American Delegate of the Guardia d'Onore dell Pantheon

Cav. Theodore "Ted" Jacobsen (New York) conferred with the Order of Ethiopian Lion

Comm. Maestro Vincent La Selva (New York) marked 35th season as director of the New York Grand Opera

Cav. di Gran Croce Gen. Peter Pace (Virginia) awarded the 2008 Presidential Medal of Freedom

Comm. Anne Paolucci (New York) published *Escape and Return - The Search for Identity: A Cultural Journey*

Uff. Dr. Alfred A. Rotondaro (Virginia) honored with "Humanitarian Award" by the Sons of Italy Foundation

Cav. Angelo V. Vivolo (New York) prepared the menu for His Holiness Benedict XVI during the New York leg of the Pontiff's visit to the United States.

Cavalieri who receive honors and other recognitions should send information and a bust photograph to:

Editor, *Il Cavaliere*, American Society of the Italian Legions of Merit, Eight East 69th Street, New York, New York 10021.

Cronaca

Since his election by acclamation on November 29, 2004, the President of the Society, Cav. di Gran Croce Hon. Dominic R. Massaro, continues to represent it at the following chivalric, diplomatic and beneficent events:

June 10, 2008: by invitation of H.E. Celestino Migliore, Permanent Observer of the Holy See at the United Nations, on the occasion of the 2008 Path to Peace Award dinner in honor of H.E. Elias Antonio Saca Gonzalez, President of El Salvador.

July 14, 2008: by invitation of Hon. Branko Milic', Consul General of Montenegro in New York, on the occasion of a reception celebrating Montenegrin National Day.

September 15, 2008: by invitation of H.E. Celestino Migliore, Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations, on the occasion of a Prayer Service on the opening of the United Nations General Assembly.



OFFICIAL NOTICE



TO: *Cavalieri*
FROM: *Cav. di Gran Croce B.ssa Mariuccia Zerilli-Marimò*
RE: **Vacancies in Office; Nominations and Elections**

Pursuant to Article VII, Sec. 3, of the By-Laws, the following vacancies in office are certified, effective on January 1, 2009:

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| President | Immediate Past President |
| Executive Vice President | Seven (7) Regional Vice Presidents |
| Secretary General | Three (3) Directors (expiring 12/31/09) |
| Treasurer | Four (4) Directors (expiring 12/31/10) |

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Pursuant to Article V, Sec. 1, of the By-Laws, the following members are hereby appointed to the Nominating Committee:

<i>Cav. di Gran Croce</i> Dr. Lucio Caputo	<i>Gr. Uff.</i> Hon. Frank J. Guarini, Chairman	<i>Comm.</i> Prof. Marco Grassi
<i>Comm.</i> Joseph R. Cerrell		<i>Cav.</i> Michael Santangelo, Esq.

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Pursuant to Article V, Sec. 1, and Article VI, Sec. 2, of the By-Laws, the following members are hereby nominated by the Nominating Committee for the office(s) hereinabove set forth for a two-year term expiring December 31, 2010 (excepting three (3) unexpired one-year-term Directors hereinafter noted):

President: <i>Cav. di Gran Croce</i> Hon. Dominic R. Massaro of New York	Regional Vice President (Mid-Atlantic): <i>Cav.</i> Dr. Thomas Bellavia of New Jersey	of New York (exp. 12/31/10)
Executive Vice President: <i>Uff.</i> Hon. Marie L. Garibaldi of New Jersey	Regional Vice President (Northeast): <i>Cav.</i> Kevin C. Caira, of Massachusetts	Director: <i>Comm.</i> Robert J. Barbera of California (exp. 12/31/09)
Secretary General: <i>Cav. di Gran Croce</i> B.ssa Mariuccia Zerilli-Marimò of New York	Regional Vice President (Southwest): <i>Comm.</i> Dr. Eugene Casagrande, of Arizona	Director: <i>Comm.</i> Claudio C. Cifoni of Pennsylvania (exp. 12/31/10)
Treasurer: <i>Cav.</i> Salvatore M. Salibello of New York	Regional Vice President (Pacific): <i>Comm.</i> Frank J. De Santis of California	Director: <i>Comm.</i> Joseph Colagiovanni, Esq. of Missouri (exp. 12/31/09)
Immediate Past President: <i>Uff.</i> Joseph Sciamè of New York	Regional Vice President (Southeast): <i>Uff.</i> Dr. Mark Fehrs Haukohl, of Texas	Director: <i>Cav.</i> Marcella Leonetti-Tyler of California (exp. 12/31/09)
Regional Vice President (North Central): <i>Comm.</i> Robert V. Allegrini, of Illinois	Regional Vice President (West): <i>Cav.</i> Mary Ann A. Ravarino, of Utah	Director: <i>Cav.</i> Alfonso E. Panico of Connecticut (exp. 12/31/10)
	Director: <i>Comm.</i> Stefano E.B. Acunto	Director: <i>Gr. Uff.</i> Frank Stella of Michigan (exp. 12/31/10)

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Pursuant to Article V, Sec. 2, of the By-Laws, "candidates other than those nominated by the Nominating Committee may be proposed by any regular active member from the floor by letter to the Secretary General, on fifteen (15) days prior [to the December 4, 2008 annual meeting of the Board] written notice, containing the name of the nominee and his/her nominator, the office for which the nominee seeks election, the nominee's biographical data, and the signature of seven (7) members of the Board of Directors or of fifteen (15) regular active members as second ... [and the Secretary General] shall, upon receipt, add any such nominee(s) to the list of nominations provided by the Nominating Committee to the Board for election."

